

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) In a steering apparatus for supporting a steering shaft to which a steering wheel is attached so that said steering shaft is displaceable in an axis-direction,

an improvement characterized by comprising:

an inner column for supporting said steering shaft rotatably;

a pair of brackets fitted to a car body and disposed in positions facing each other with respect to an axis of said steering shaft;

a tension member extending between said pair of brackets;

two pieces of fixing members for fixing said tension member from outside of said pair of brackets;

a displacement causing member, disposed between said tension member bracket and said fixing member, for causing

a relative displacement between said bracket and said
~~fixing member~~pair of brackets; and

an outer column held on the car body through a connection between said tension member, said brackets and said fixing members, having a pressing portion of which an outer periphery is brought into contact with both of said pair of brackets due to the relative displacement of said brackets between at least said pair of brackets, and having an inner peripheral surface embracing an outer periphery of said inner column,

wherein said pair of brackets interlocking with said tension member gets close to each other due to the displacement caused by said displacement causing member, a pressing force is thereby applied to said inner column via said pressing portion of said outer column, and said inner column maintains its axis-directional position with respect to said brackets through said outer column.

2. (Original) A steering apparatus according to claim 1, wherein an axis of said steering shaft substantially intersects a line that connects centers of said two fixing members.

3. (Currently Amended) A steering apparatus according to claim ~~1 or 2~~, wherein said pair of brackets is formed with tilt grooves.

4. (Currently Amended) A steering apparatus according to ~~any one of claims 1 through 3~~claim 1, wherein said outer column includes an integrally-formed car body fitting portion.

5. (Currently Amended) A steering apparatus according to ~~any one of claims 1 through 4~~claim 1, wherein part of said inner column is formed with at least one elongate hole extending in an axis-direction, and an inner peripheral surface of said outer column is formed with a protruded portion engaging with said elongate hole and extending inwards in a radial direction.

6. (Currently Amended) A steering apparatus according to ~~any one of claims 1 through 5~~claim 1, wherein said tension member is constructed of a plurality of parts that can be divided so as to form an annular configuration embracing said outer column.

7. (New) A steering apparatus according to any one of claim 1, wherein said tension member is disposed outwardly in the radial direction from said inner column.